



## Best Tweed Heads and Northern Rivers Safety Electrician, EJ Electrical Works, Gold Coast Contractor Warns Against Cheap Components Nearby

Gold Coast Electrician Warns Against “Cheap” Components

Australia prides itself in some of the best product-safety legislation in the world, but consumers still need to be alert, particularly when it comes to building materials and electrical components warns EJ Barnes, CEO of a Gold Coast electrical contracting firm.

It has been in the news since 2013, and although there has no doubt been progress, Barnes warns that non-compliant building materials and components still find their way onto building sites. As he points out, our legislation may be excellent, but enforcement may not be as easy as it sounds. “A lot of building materials and components are imported,” he says, “and I’m not convinced that they’re all checked for compliance with our safety standards.”

It’s a valid concern and one that comes back to haunt us for years after the materials have been used. The Infinity cables scandal in which retailers sold non-compliant electrical cable may be a few years old, but with an estimated 40,000 Australian homes having used it, it would be impossible to know just how many have replaced it for a safer option.

The fire at the Docklands Lacrosse Tower in 2015 which consumed 13 stories of apartments in just 15 minutes triggered a spike in awareness, but more than 3 years later, Barnes isn’t convinced that the problem has been eliminated despite the tragedy. “Non-compliant building materials and electrical components are still common in my opinion,” he says.

In many instances, non-compliant components are cheaper than ones that pass muster. It’s unfair, says Barnes, since Australian companies go to a lot of expense making sure their products are in line with safety standards. “Then along comes an importer with a non-compliant, cheap product, and whether because of buyer ignorance or greed, the local manufacturer has to compete with lower pricing.”

In the end, says Barnes, it’s consumers who are at risk, and the motivation for placing them in this position isn’t acceptable. “You can save a few dollars by using non-compliant materials - and you could end up being responsible for deaths. It’s just not worth it.”

There are a few measures that electrical and construction clients can take to ensure that they’re getting safe installations, says Barnes. To begin with, it pays to be suspicious of surprisingly low quotes for work.

“If you’re seeing quotes way below what other professionals are charging, you may not have found a bargain,” he warns. “Check itemised quotes carefully. Determine where the contractor aims to save costs and consider how it might affect you. If component costs are remarkably low, you could be looking at non-compliant materials, and that’s downright dangerous.”

Consumers also need to check whether they’ll get certified work. Getting a certificate of compliance is a must, and if a business won’t issue one, it is operating outside the law. A compliance certificate isn’t bullet-proof, but Barnes says most construction contractors will do due diligence when issuing one.

Building inspectors have been criticised for declaring projects as being compliant after minimal physical inspection of works, but for Barnes, vouching for compliance means supervising in person and checking all completed work himself. “That certificate means I’m personally responsible for the safety of the installation,” he says. “It’s not something I take lightly.”

The issue of building safety and non-compliance in the construction industry isn’t going away anytime soon, but with ethical businesses like EJ Electrical Works and Coastline Local Electricians striving for the highest safety standards, consumers can proceed with confidence. If you’d like to know more about this local Gold Coast business, you can reach Barnes via his website or by calling or give them a call on 1300-DIAL-EJ, that’s 1300 342 535.

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